GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3535
ANSWERED ON:19.08.2003
REPATRIATION OF SRI LANKAN TAMIL REFUGEES
K. MALAISAMY

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the Sri Lankan Tamil Refugees stationed at Mandapam Camp in Tamil Nadu are offered and even persuaded to go back to Sri Lanka by Sri Lankan authorities;

(b) if so, the progress achieved in the process of their repatriation;

(c) the role of the Government to speed up this process; and

(d) the terms and conditions of repatriation?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SWAMI CHINMAYANAND)

(a): Yes, Sir. Shri Lankan authorities have visited refugees of Mandapam Camp for the purpose of issuing emergency travel documents to refugees willing to return and to assure them of support by the Government of Sri Lanka in the event of repatriation. However, they were not persuaded to go back to Sri Lanka.

(b): Government has not organized repatriation of Sri Lankan refugees after 1995 due to continued disturbed conditions in Sri Lanka. However, a small number of willing Sri Lankan refugees have returned voluntarily.

(c) & (d): The Government of India is in touch with the Govt. of Sri Lanka regarding organised repatriation of willing Sri Lankan refugees. However, the actual repatriation may commence only after a favourable response is received from Govt. of Sri Lanka and the modalities for such repatriation are finalised.